(b) Some posts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes could not be filled by candidates belonging to these categories because of non-availability of suitable candidates, etc.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Vacant posts of SCs/STs

†991. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the posts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes which are lying vacant in various Departments of Central Government for more than one year, Ministry-wise;

(b) whether Government have issued any directions for filling up of the said vacant posts; and

(c) if so, by when the above posts are proposed to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Information is not Centrally maintained.

(b) The Government issued instructions *vide* Department of Personnel and Training's O.M. No. 36012/5/97-Estt. (Res.) Vol.II dated 20th July, 2000 requesting all Ministries/Departments to carry out a review for early assessment of the backlog vacancies in respect of SCs and STs both by way of direct recruitment and promotion and make concerted efforts to fill up backlog vacancies.

(c) All Ministries/Department are required to fill up the backlog reserved vacancies at the earliest.

Purchase of computers by Kendriya Bhandar

992. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Kendriya Bhandar is still purchasing computers, HP cartridges and other branded items at higher prices from retailers instead of manufacturers and authorized distributors in contravention of the revised purchase policy-2003; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.